

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1370

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MILI, MPOL, EFIS, SNAR, BF, UK

SUBJECT: BAHAMAS DEFENCE FORCE

1. ON FRIDAY, 28 JULY 1978, THE FLAG SHIP OF THE BAHAMAS DEFENCE FORCE, HMBS MARLIN, A 103 FOOT VOSPER PATROL CRAFT, AND HER SISTER SHIP, HMBS FLAMINGO, DOCKED AT PRINCE GEORGE WHARF NASSAU, COMPLETING A 6,000 MILE OCEAN VOYAGE THAT BEGAN IN PORTSMOUTH, ENGLAND, APPROXIMATELY SIX MONTHS AGO. THE SHIPS WERE GREETED BY PRIME MINISTER PINDLING, MEMBERS OF HIS GOVERNMENT, MEMBERS OF THE DIPLOMATIC COMMUNITY, AND RELATIVES AND FRIENDS OF THE CREW. THE TWO PATROL CRAFT LATER TRAVELED TO THE WESTERN END OF NEW PROVIDENCE ISLAND TO THEIR CAROL HARBOR HOME PORT.

2. THIS BRINGS THE BAHAMAS DEFENCE TO FULL STRENGTH WITH REGARD TO PATROL CRAFT WITH A TOTAL OF TWO 103 FOOTERS AND SEVEN 60 FOOTERS.

3. IN REMARKS MADE TO THE PRESS FOLLOWING THE ARRIVAL OF THE MARLIN AND FLAMINGO, PM PINDLING CONGRATULATED THE CREW OF THE BOATS FOR THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS NOTING THAT THE EXPERIENCE GAINED ON THE 6,000 MILE VOYAGE WILL MAKE THEM "QUITE CAPABLE
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OF OPERATING THE VESSELS." HE ALSO SAID (1) THAT THERE ARE NO IMMEDIATE PLANS FOR THE PURCHASE OF OTHER BOATS SINCE "THESE BOATS WE HAVE NOW SHOULD MEET OUR REQUIREMENTS FOR SOME TIME"; (2) THAT "THE OBJECTIVE IS NOT TO HAVE A BOAT IN EVERY BAHAMIAN PORT AS THAT CAN NEVER BE POSSIBLE"; (3) THAT "THE BOATS WILL BE EXCELLENT FOR USE IN

SEA RESCUES, HURRICAN DISASTERS AND OTHER RELIEF
TYPE ACTIVITIES"; (4) THAT "TO DATE THE BAHAMAS
HAS NOT HAD ANY TROUBLE WITH CUBAN POACHERS ONLY
WITH CUBAN-AMERICAN POACHERS"; AND (5) WITH REGARD
TO DRUG RUNNING, THAT "IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME
BEFORE THERE IS A CONFRONTATION AND THAT THE
DEFENCE FORCE IS TRAINED TO COPE WITH THAT, WHILE
THE MARINE POLICE WERE NOT."
SCHWARTZ

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